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AUTHOR Terrey, John N.
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ABSTRACT

Current writers on the topic of educational leadership express essentially the same concerns: the absence of leadership and vision, the tendency to select survivalism over risk, and the control by managers rather than leaders. These writers highlight both the craving and the need for leadership. Several recent publications provide insights into the issues of leadership, vision, strategic planning, organizational culture, and excellence from a general perspective that can be applied to higher education. These include: (1) "Excellence," by John Gardner; (2) "Leadership," by James MacGregor Burns; (3) "Innovation and Entrepreneurship," by Peter Drucker; (4) "Re-inventing the Corporation," by John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene; (5) "Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge," by Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus; (6) "Creating Excellence," by Craig R. Hickman and Michael A. Silva; and (7) "Organizational Culture and Leadership," by Edgar H. Schein. (The paper provides a critical assessment of each of these works, highlighting ideas and suggestions that can improve educational leadership.) (LAL)

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LEADERSHIP CAN CREATE EXCELLENCE

John N. Terrey
Executive Director
Washington State Board for Community College Education

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LEADERSHIP CAN CREATE EXCELLENCE

(A speech delivered by John N. Terrey, executive director of the Washington State Board for Community College Education, at the AACJC Convention in Orlando, Florida, on April 14, 1986.)

Today it is popular to be searching for excellence and to be seeking leadership. Excellence always has been a popular pursuit. Leadership always has been in short supply. What makes these topics timely is the shrill concern being expressed by the few recognized leaders we have about the dearth of leadership. There is a dangerous drift at a critical time within our organizations, including community colleges.

My principal task is to look at the current writings on leadership. It is not my intention to be critical of the many people who contribute themselves tirelessly and intelligently to advancing the visions of the community college. I am one of them. But, in kindness and with concern, I am convinced that we need to do better than we are. Excellence, if it is worthy of pursuit, must be beyond our complete grasp but within our pursuit. Leadership is needed in every period, but it is especially needed at this time because, as William Deegan and Dale Tillery have said in their new book, this is a time for "*renewing the American community college.*"

The pages of history crawl with crises. Ours, in this hour, is critical, because we need to shape a new role for community colleges in a changing world of finite resources. Inventing a new role requires a vision. Vision is the heart of leadership. But fiscal constraints may be the greatest force in shaping the renewal of community colleges. The comprehensive community college dotted the landscape of the nation during an era of addition. One governor bluntly informed his listeners that today is an era of subtraction. If a shift in priorities shifts more money to some priorities, others must lose money.

The English poet, Matthew Arnold, in the middle of the last century saw the religious certitude of his youth challenged by the advancement of science. He wrote:

O born in days when wits were fresh and clear,
And life ran gayly as the sparkling Thames;
Before this strange disease of modern life,
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
Its heads o'ertaxed, its palsied hearts, was rife--

Later in a subsequent poem, he summarized his plight:

Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
The other powerless to be born.

Our plight--real and significant--in our struggle to invent a viable future is less desperate than Matthew Arnold's. Our past and present have been brilliant chapters. But change, even inevitable change, is to many an uncomfortable disease. We need to change and we need the leaders who can visualize and articulate the change. If I appear to step on any toes, remember that, as with Robert Frost, we are engaged in a lover's quarrel.

In order to establish the obvious, I want to quote some recent observations from those who live in the academic community about the urgency of the need for leadership.

Clark Kerr in two recent books sponsored by the Association of Governing Boards has been critical of the present leadership in higher education. Here are some quotes from **Presidents Make a Difference**.

In the Foreword, he cites with agreement Joseph Kauffmann:

> *Our colleges and universities are in desperate need of leadership.*

In his own words he says:

> *The central reality is that the American college and university presidency is in trouble.* (Note the choice of words. He says "*presidency*," not "*president*."
>
> *...the attractiveness of the presidency has deteriorated. Persons who have refused presidencies frequently note that the management of decline...is not as attractive as the management of growth. Some also note that the new ambience of greater participation by more groups, each expecting consultation, can lead to exhausting multiple negotiations with less likelihood of results than in earlier times.*
>
> *Strengthening presidential leadership is one of the most urgent concerns on the agenda of higher education in the United States. It makes a great difference who the presidents are and what the conditions are that surround their contributions. The greatest test of a board in the long run is the quality of the presidents it is able to attract and to retain.*

In **The Many Lives of Academic Presidents** which Kerr wrote with Marian Gade, they wrote:

> *Just when American colleges and universities may need an infusion of strong presidential leadership, the academic environment seems less likely to encourage or support it.*

Later they added that the college presidency is, and I quote, "*less influential just at a time it is more needed to defend institutional autonomy, to manage conflict, to integrate separatist forces, to offset small-group efforts at inefficiencies and exploitations, and to advance programs over attempted special-interests vetoes.*"

In the Foreword to **Renewing the American Community College** by William Deegan and Dale Tillery, Kerr wrote with a historic note:

> *The builders are almost all gone; the managers have taken over. Most of them are highly efficient. But a few of the presidents have become primarily survivors; and in the process of surviving, some have become servants to any groups or person with power. The clear visions are almost gone.*

The key words are "*builders*," "*managers*," "*survivors*," and "*visions*." Arthur Levine, now president of Bradford College but formerly a senior fellow at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, wrote on survival with the bitter cynicism that comes with idealism. He notes that the great visions are lacking and that higher education is mired in survivalism which, he contends, makes leadership impossible for three reasons:

- First survivalism puts the emphasis on minimizing the risk at the expense of the creative ideas which keep institutions vibrant.

- Second, "*survivalism represents a way of each against all. Faculties and departments hunker down and protect their turf. In this way, each faculty member is divided from every other, and each department from all the rest. Everyone is out for himself and all are in the business of survival. There are, accordingly, no followers--and so there can be no leaders.*"

- Third, tough decisions are not made. Politically expedient decisions are served up to appease rather than to risk. Leadership as defined by Peter Drucker is risk taking, but risk taking requires that there be followers.

Levine's obvious conclusion is:

> *The survival mentality is debilitating to higher education. Not only does it deprive colleges and universities of their dreams and their leaders, it robs them of their reason for being. The price they pay for each additional day of life is quality. They trade excellence for survival.*

Ernest L. Boyer, the president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, sounded essentially the same theme. Our colleges and universities are no longer the creative institutions they should be, he contends. Why? "*Today's academic leaders...frequently are consumed by process, preoccupied with politics and management of education.*"

The logistics of daily operations and the preoccupation with firefighting deprives the president of his rightful role of decision-maker. He becomes a cog in a huge machine. Boyer contends that a sense of powerlessness sets in and, as a consequence, he says, "*new ideas are snuffed out and universities become lifeless, uncreative institutions--just another regulated industry.*" James L. Fisher, president of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), in his book **Power of the Presidency** quotes Kerr as stating: "*Of all the problems confronting higher education in the coming years, the greatest will be leadership.*" He quickly follows by quoting David Riesman as stating that "*increasingly, the American college presidency appears to be faceless.*" Abraham Zaleznik, a professor of social psychology at the Harvard Business School, has studied the psychological traits of leaders and managers in seeking an answer to the question: Are they different? His answer is that they are different. They have different attitudes toward their goals, careers, and relations with others. There are no known ways to train great leaders.

Managers tend to adopt impersonal, often passive, attitudes toward goals. Managerial goals tend to spring from necessities rather than desires. Leaders tend to be active rather than reactive. They adopt a personal and active attitude toward goals. For a fuller discussion of this topic, see "Managers and Leaders: Are They Different?" in **Executive Success: Making It in Management**, edited by Eliza G. C. Collins and published for the **Harvard Business Review** by John Wiley and Sons, Inc., in 1983.

These people I have quoted are not the enemies of higher education; they are the friends. They have worked hard to improve the condition of higher education. They are all on the front line, not in the ivory tower. Kerr and Riesman are veteran observers and shapers. Fisher, a psychologist, is an impassioned crusader for higher education. Levine is the youngest, probably the most idealistic. Boyer stands between Kerr and Levine--a practitioner at the campus, state, federal, and foundation levels. These are the people who wear the mantle of leadership in higher education today. They are concerned because they perceive higher education as being adrift at the moment of crisis. Leadership, they contend, is absent when new directions and new purposes must be shaped. There is danger--danger that our colleges and universities will be compromised--that quality will be offered up as a sacrifice to the Philistines.

John W. Gardner in his usual constructive manner provides the most eloquent statement of our crisis:

> *Unlike the great pyramids, the monuments of the spirit will not stand untended. They must be nourished in each generation by the allegiance of believing men and women. Free men and women, in their work, their family life, and in their public behavior, should see themselves as builders and maintainers of the values of their society.*

Most frightening of all in the terrible mosaic I have pieced together is the fact that essentially the same concerns--the absence of leadership and vision, the tendency to select survivalism over risk, the control by managers rather than leaders--are present in all our institutions, in our political system, our corporations, our churches. Yet there is a craving for leadership. Why is there the absence and the craving? On the campus, the answers are plentiful, but are they the good reasons or the real reasons? Here is my list. Unionization of faculty, increasing control from the state level, boards that are weak and/or ineffective, excessive participation in decision-making, demands of the trivial at the expense of the vital, the lack of money, abuses of the tenure system--the list could go on.

A decade ago, Warren Bennis wrote a book--**The Unconscious Conspiracy**--in which he searched for the answer to the question: Why can't leaders lead? Bennis at the time was the president of the University of Cincinnati. He had been a student of Douglas McGregor. In fact, he helped edit McGregor's essays entitled **Leadership and Motivation**. When Bennis had been president for ten months, he was in his office. He was bone-weary and soul-weary. The clock was moving toward four in the morning. He had concluded: "*Either I can't manage this place, or it's unmanageable.*" What had he been spending the last ten months doing? Certainly not advancing the vision he had for the University of Cincinnati. Here was his discovery:

> *I had become the victim of a vast, amorphous, unwitting, unconscious conspiracy to prevent me from doing anything whatever to change the university's status quo.*

As a consequence, he formulated Bennis's first law. Routine work drives out non-routine work, or, how to smother to death all creative planning, all fundamental change in the university--or <u>any</u> institution.

A second law logically followed: Make whatever grand plans you will, you may be sure the unexpected or the trivial will disturb and disrupt them.

He concluded that most institutions, especially higher education institutions, suffered from a threefold loss: Loss of community, loss of purpose, and loss of power. To Bennis, the loss of power really meant the dispersement of power among the myriad of committees and commissions and boards and senates in what is optimistically called "*participatory democracy*" or "*shared governance.*" He discovered that sharing was not the result; the result was a diarrhea of participation with a constipation of decision. Votes cancelled votes. The real enemy was not anarchy; it was apathy.

Bennis, even a decade ago, recognized that higher education was confronting a crisis crying for leadership, but leaders were not leading. They were victims of an unconscious conspiracy which forced them to utilize their time consulting, pleading, temporizing, martyrizing, trotting, putting out fires, avoiding or taking the heat. They were studying navigation while the ship was sinking.

What must presidents do to avoid the debilitating trap of the unconscious conspiracy? According to Bennis, they should "*conceptualize.*" In today's language they should devote their critical time to strategic thinking, strategic planning, and culture building.

Convinced that there is a real need for leadership if we are to achieve the excellence our society needs, I decided on a plan of study. I developed the plan with certain convictions already in mind. I am convinced that the community college is the greatest educational innovation of this century. I am convinced further than our finest days are yet to come. As a corollary, I am realistic enough to know that there are no easy victories.

- I am convinced that our present purposes are undergoing genuine questioning.
- I am convinced that the quality of our programs is being questioned.
- I am convinced that we must be forever vigilant on all issues of efficiency because financial resources will not be plentiful.
- I am convinced that in our educational purposes we must become more effective.
- I am convinced that community colleges will have increasing and changing demands placed upon them.

- I am convinced that the greatest challenge we will face as a nation will be on the economic front. However, at stake is something much greater than the state of the economy on the national and the international fronts.

- I am convinced that the highest issue at stake is the place of the nation in the world. Will we accept the challenge of greatness or will we quietly accept a lesser role for the United States in the world?

Education is essential if we are to sustain hope. Leadership in education is central or more central than ever before and more elusive.

Rather than read about leadership in higher education, I decided to read about the issues of leadership, vision, strategic planning, organizational culture, excellence, etc., from a general perspective and apply it to higher education based on my own knowledge of higher education. What was important in this technique was that it required greater activity on my part as a learner because I had to translate what I read and learned from one setting to another.

I limited myself to ten books. Selecting the ten books became a task. A premium was placed on recent publications. Obviously, there is not time to go through all ten of the books, but I am pleased to share the list with you.

If anyone is challenged enough to read the list, let me provide some guidance. Start with John Gardner's **Excellence**. The revised edition came out in 1984. It is a complete rewrite of the 1961 publication, and it is even better than the original edition. Gardner is thoughtful and beautifully articulate. His basic values are flashed upon every page. The tendency to quote him is too strong to be denied.

> *It is essential to a society's health--obviously--that people have confidence in their institutions. But they don't need to believe that their society is perfect. Far from it. They need to know that on balance it is likely to meet their basic needs and confirm their values. Humans have always lived partly on present satisfaction, partly on hope. And it's the task of the leader to keep the hope alive. It is the ultimate fuel.*

The "old" book on the list is **Leadership** by James MacGregor Burns. It won a Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award in 1978. To historians Burns is a political scientist and to political scientists he is a fine historian. His book is impressive and comprehensive. The seventeen chapters cover virtually every aspect of leadership. It is the basic book for an overview of leadership.

Burns observes that we know too much about our leaders and too little about leadership. He cited 130 definitions of the word "leadership."

He defines leadership "*as a structure of action that engages persons, to varying degrees, throughout the levels and among the interstices of society.*" Collective purpose (vision) is at the epicenter of leadership.

Burns's book elaborates on three concepts of leadership--transactional, transforming, and moral. "Transactional" leadership is a quid pro quo process; e.g., jobs for votes, votes for campaign contributions. The legislative process is an example of the transactional leadership concept at work. "Transforming" leadership recognizes the relationship between the leader and the follower. *"The result of transforming leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulating and elevation that converts (transforms) followers into leaders and may convert (transform) leaders into moral agents."* "Moral" leadership is the most complex of the three. Burns identifies three key elements in the concept:

1. That leaders and followers have a relationship not only of power but of mutual needs, aspirations, and values;

2. That in responding to leaders, followers have adequate knowledge of alternative leaders and programs and the capacity to choose among the alternatives; and

3. That leaders take responsibility for their commitments.

Burns, who authored two prize-winning books on Franklin D. Roosevelt, quotes FDR on the subject of moral leadership:

> *The Presidency is...pre-eminently a place of moral leadership. All our great Presidents were leaders of thought at times when certain historical ideas in the life of the nation had to be clarified.... That is what the office is--a superb opportunity for reapplying, applying in new conditions, the simple rules of human conduct to which we always go back.*

This last point--"*the simple rules of human conduct to which we always go back*"--is picked up later when Burns writes, "*Moral leadership emerges from, and always returns to, the fundamental wants and needs, aspirations, and values of the followers.*" To put the concept in the framework of community colleges, access is a moral issue. Access translates into opportunity. Opportunity is essential if there is to be equality. To think of access in transactional or transforming terms of leadership is to cheapen it to trading stock for lesser goals.

I want to dwell on two other books in some detail, but, in passing, I want to note that each of the books on the list has genuine merit. Peter Drucker's book--**Innovation and Entrepreneurship**--is a must. My measure is: If Peter Drucker writes it, I read it. Naisbitt and Aburdene's book--**Re-inventing the Corporation**--follows **Megatrends**. While it aims at popular consumption and seeks to be a bestseller, it has merit. For example, Chapter 3 is entitled "Re-inventing Work." The authors, for example, cite a 1983 Public Agenda Foundation study which lists the top ten qualities people want in a job today:

1. Work with people who treat you with respect
2. Interesting work
3. Recognition for good work
4. Chance to develop skills
5. Working for people who listen if you have ideas about how to do things better

6. A chance to think for yourself rather than just carry out instructions
7. Seeing the end result of your work
8. Working for efficient managers
9. A job that is not too easy
10. Feeling well-informed about what is going on

How do these qualities compare to the conventional wisdom about what faculty want? Notice that job security, high pay, and good benefits are not among the top ten. In higher education, which is a labor intensive field, where the faculty are the central force in moving a vision to a reality, the care and feeding of the faculty is essential in the formation of an organizational culture of excellence.

The most over-rated book is **A Passion for Excellence** by Tom Peters and Nancy Austin, but, in fairness, it, too, is worth reading. I find no objection to the suggestion that we discard the words "managing" and "management" on the basis of their connotation. "*Management connotes cop, referee, devil's advocate, dispassionate analyst, naysayer, pronouncer. All of these words suggest controlling, arranging, demeaning, and reducing.*" "*Leadership connotes unleashing energy, utilizing potential, building, freeing, and growing.*"

The most disappointing book was written by one of my favorite writers--Harlan Cleveland, a former president of the University of Hawaii, the dean of the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota. He is the author of one of my favorite books, **The Future Executive** (1972). However, I found **The Knowledge Executive: Leadership in an Information Society** to be a disappointment because there was not a theme to hold the book together. He does make a strong argument that in our horizontal society, most leaders begin as specialists and end as generalists. A leader's task is to get-it-all-together. This task requires a broad perspective. "*It is the generalists,*" he writes, "*who box the compass, chart the course, and say where we shall go together and when and why.*

Attitudes, he argues, are the steepest part of the generalist's learning curve. For the management of complexity, he identifies four indispensable attitudes:

1. The notion that crises are normal, tensions can be promising, and complexity is fun;

2. A realization that paranoia and self-pity are reserved for people who don't want to be executives;

3. The conviction that there must be some more upbeat outcome than would result from adding together the available expert advice; and

4. A sense of personal responsibility for the situation as a whole.

Of the ten books, after reading (rereading, I hope), John Gardner's **Excellence** and Burns's **Leadership**, I would suggest **Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge** by Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus. Following that book is the surprise book of the group, **Creating Excellence** by Craig R. Hickman and Michael A. Silva. These are excellent, thoughtful, provocative books. I wish to spend extended time on both of them.

Bennis is now the Joseph DeBell Professor of Management at the University of Southern California. His co-author is at USC also where he is the founder and the director of the Center for Futures Research. The bases for the book are 90 in-depth interviews with a cross-section of leaders, including college presidents. From an analysis of the interviews, the authors develop a strategy for developing new leaders. They define the New Leader as "*one who commits people to action, who converts followers into leaders, and who may convert leaders into agents of change.*"

The context of leadership has three parts: Commitment, complexity, and credibility. There is a gap in commitment. If the commitment needed is found only at the top, there is a problem. As a consequence, the leader has failed to instill vision, meaning, and trust in the followers. The followers are the ones who make things happen for better or for worse. The leader is responsible for bridging the gap of commitment.

Complexity is a way of life in today's organizations. Most organizations, including higher education, are adrift in a sea of data while thirsting for information. The secret in complexity is a paradox. A leader must learn to reduce complexity to simplicity and then to distrust simplicity. The first step allows understanding. The second step avoids errors because "*there are too many ironies, polarities, dichotomies, contradictions, contraries, and messes.*" The tolerance for ambiguity is essential for an effective leader. Intolerance for ambiguity, especially among followers, results in a credibility gap.

As followers become more involved in the decisions of the organization, they need the information upon which to base their actions on the decisions they are shaping. Today for a leader life is lived in a fishbowl. If credibility is not present, commitment will not exist and the desired results will not be forthcoming. Lee Iacocca is the epitome of the leader living life in a fishbowl. His style has become central to organizational success. He succeeded in transforming power and vision into reality and then sustaining it. (Iacocca, by example, illustrates the meaning of "transformative" leadership as defined by James MacGregor Burns in his book **Leadership**.) Vision is the commodity of leaders, and power is their currency. Each of the 90 leaders interviewed by Bennis and Nanus had a clear and powerful vision of what the corporation, university, hospital, foundation, football team, or symphony orchestra should be. The styles utilized by the leaders were as varied as their visions were uniform. Too much ink is used discussing style and too little emphasis is placed on the vision. The authors make this point bluntly:

> *The problem with many organizations, and especially the ones that are failing, is that they tend to be overmanaged and underled.*

They coined an aphorism which has become almost a cliche: "*Managers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right thing.*" Leaders are--or should be--concerned with those activities which relate to vision and judgment relating to the whole. Managers, in this narrow context are concerned about activities relating to routines within the parts. Leaders address effectiveness; managers address efficiency. Those interviewed saw themselves as leaders, not managers. Their time and energies were spent on the basic purpose and general direction of the organization. All the people interviewed had an agenda, an unparalleled concern with outcome.

The first two steps or strategies for leadership are focusing on vision for action and communicating the vision--giving meaning to the vision through communication. *"Success requires the capacity to relate a compelling image of a desired state of affairs--the kind of image that induces enthusiasm and commitment in others."*

After the first two strategies are in place, the third becomes critical. It is trust. The authors define it as follows: *"Trust is the lubrication that makes it possible for organizations to work."*

Trust is essential in order to provide accountability, predictability, and reliability. Trust is generated through positioning. What position does the leader take? Followers are harsh judges. They are often too cynical to accept what the leader says. They are, however, pragmatic enough to seek out what the leader does. The success of Martin Luther King, Jr., was the result of what he did, of how he positioned himself. He became predictable and reliable enough through his actions so that he could win the trust of those who followed him.

The final strategy is the deployment of self. Leadership is an intense human endeavor. The leaders interviewed spent approximately 90 percent of their time with people working out human problems. They need to have a strong self-regard, not a self-regard that needs constant re-enforcement. It must give re-enforcement. They define "self-regard" as follows:

> *It consists of three major components: Knowledge of one's strengths, the capacity to nurture and develop those strengths, and the ability to discern the fit between one's strengths and weaknesses and the organization's needs.*

Bennis and Nanus have put a framework around the basic beliefs of leaders. An analogy is suggested by the authors and developed here. The conductor of a symphony orchestra is a leader. The conductor has the vision of what the score should sound like. The vision is more than a reading of the notes. Bernstein's vision of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony is different from Toscanini's vision. The tempo, phrasing, interpretation, and dynamics are different. But the baton does not make music. The musicians do. The work of the orchestra is done by the members of the orchestra, each of whom is a professional who has probably played Beethoven's Fifth Symphony many times for several different conductors, each of whom had a slightly but significantly different vision of the same score. The conductor as a leader must convey his vision to those who make the music. He serves the crucial role of bringing different talents together through proper pacing and coordination. He gets his results through others. John Gardner carried the analogy into society:

> *Leaders have a significant role in creating the state of mind that is the society. They can serve as symbols of the moral unity of the society. They can express the values that hold the society together. Most important, they can conceive and articulate goals that lift people out of their petty preoccupations, carry them above the conflicts that tear a society apart, and unite them in the pursuit of objectives worthy of their best efforts.*

The second of the two major books which impressed me the most is **Creative Excellence: Managing Corporate Culture, Strategy, and Changes in the New Age**. The authors are Craig R. Hickman and Michael A. Silva. Both are practicing CEOs with consulting backgrounds--Arthur Young and Company.

They emphasize change as the essential characteristic of the New Age leader. New Age leaders are the ones who profit from change because they anticipate and invent change. Good organizations with records of excellence are the result of individual leaders, not the other way around. Leaders make organizations good; organizations do not make good leaders. Excellence and leaders go together. Excellence is created by leaders through strategy and culture.

Their book stresses strategy--strategic thinking and strategic planning--and corporate or organizational culture. Vision is the product of strategic thinking. The vision must be developed and in place before the strategic planning can take place. Most firms are either strategy-deficient or culture-deficient. No successful organization can be excellent without both strategy and culture. Similarly, no organization with strategy and culture is without an effective leader. The New Age skills are six in number. They are: Creative Insight, Sensitivity, Vision, Versatility, Focus, and Patience.

Creative insight and sensitivity are the foundation for two different activities--the strategies and the cultures. Vision and patience integrate the skills. Versatility and focus provide for adaptation to change. Vision yokes insight and sensitivity; therefore, it follows those two. Patience follows versatility and focus because it links all the other skills through timing. The finest vision at the wrong time is fatally flawed.

Here is a description of each of the six skills:

Creative insight is asking the right questions. Insight focuses on the right or real question or problem or issue, not just on the visible symptoms. No solution will be better than the insight that preceded it.

Sensitivity gets to the significance of people to every organization. No culture can be formed except through people. Motivation to achieve high goals comes through a culture created and implemented and sustained by people.

Vision is the process of seeing the future in the present, of journeying mentally from the known to the unknown. The raw materials of the vision are one's ideals, faith, convictions, facts, figures, hopes, dreams, fears, and opportunities.

Versatility is necessary in order to anticipate change. The wider is one's anchorage in life, the greater is one's versatility, and the better is one's talent for anticipating change. A leader's interests are not singular; they are broad. The mind is inquisitive.

Focus is the essential in implementing change. The vision is modified through change which is external. To translate the changing vision internally to reality is an important role for a leader. The strategies and the culture must be in harmony, and harmony is achieved through focus. What Warren Bennis discovered in the unconscious conspiracy was that a multitude of activities were distorting his focus and thereby his ability to implement change.

Patience is the art of living for the long term. Organizations tend to have a longer life than that period of leadership assigned to any one person. As the comic stated so truthfully, the trouble with life is that it is so daily. Impatience can quickly disrupt the comfort level, the tolerance for ambiguity,

which destroys the harmony and focus within the people who constitute the culture. Focus and patience help the leader to overcome the three deadly attitudes which can create discontinuity and destroy the learning needed to make the six skills of the New Age effective. These deadly attitudes are: Short-term orientation, shallow thinking, and quick-fix expectations.

Organizations, like people, move through reasonably predictable stages in their development. One may conclude all too truthfully that an institution begins with inspiration and ends in structure. When an institution loses all the inspiration which brought it into being, and it becomes all structure, it is known as a bureaucracy. Each organization moves through four common stages: (1) start-up (originating strategy and culture), (2) growth (holding strategy and culture together), (3) crisis (radically altering strategy and culture), and (4) evolution (fine-tuning strategy and culture). Central to the entire process and essential to the creation of excellence is a common purpose. As Peter Drucker has stated in virtually all of his books, there are two basic questions which need to be asked: What is our business and what ought it to be? Purpose is the only means to answer those twin questions.

Hickman and Silva develop each of the concepts I have outlined. It is a very thoughtful, well-organized book worthy of careful reading.

The book from which I learned the most dealt with a subject about which I had the most to learn--Edgar H. Schein's **Organizational Culture and Leadership**. Corporate or organizational culture is where the greatest pioneering is going on currently. Schein has done an outstanding job of relating culture and leadership. His definition of "culture" within an organization is:

> *A pattern of basic assumptions--invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learn to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration--that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.*

This is the book I want to study again. Schein is with the Sloan School of Management at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and, like Warren Bennis, was a student of Douglas McGregor's.

Now as we approach the conclusion, what has been discovered? What has this reading generated? Here are the points I have identified for presidents who wish to create excellence.

1. The president needs to be leader--a person who does the right things. A good president wisely has efficient managers on the team.

2. The president needs to avoid being rendered ineffective through being victimized by Bennis' unconscious conspiracy. This means setting priorities for the use of time and energies. Kerr provides some thoughtful suggestions:

a. Serve the board
b. Serve the campus
c. Serve the community
d. Serve the future
e. Serve society. Father Hesburgh says: *"Any president who isn't heard <u>outside</u> the campus isn't worth being heard <u>inside</u>."*

3. The president must develop and project a clear vision. Clark Kerr includes the vision under his topic "Serve the Future." He says:

> *The president has the primary responsibility for assessing the likely future and for preparing the campus to meet it. The essence of the presidential task is "to cast a vision on the place," and then "to move to the internalization of the vision" within the college or university community.*

4. The president must develop the culture of the campus which is an outgrowth of the vision and the strategic planning process. John Gardner in **<u>Excellence</u>** observes sagely:

> *Our top leaders have a critical role in helping us to achieve a sense of direction, to aid us in sifting priorities and clarifying values. But the old, hierarchical model is of limited value today. Less and less can top leaders, political, corporate, or whatever, make the system work without the help of many [illegible] throughout the society or organization....*

5. The president must be clear in answering the question: What is our purpose?

The weakest element in the present state-of-the-art on collegiate leadership is the president's relationship to academic affairs. Academic affairs represent the purpose of the institution. Too many presidents have delegated this responsibility and have, therefore, delegated the central purpose. This is fatal. The president is at all times the chief academic officer. No institution will have excellence if the president is not at the very center of the academic enterprise. Corporations do not divorce the president from the centrality of their purposes.

6. The president must be a reader--a person who seeks to relate himself and his institution to a larger world within the swell and reach of change and history. The president must be a learner among learners.

7. The president must be the chief communicator. Warren Bennis says:

> *All organizations that are in trouble either have no vision or they get mixed messages about what their vision is. To get out of that trouble you need to get the top officers or board to realize what they are communicating and how it is blurring or even contradicting the vision.*

8. The president, especially the community college president, must be guided in the formation of the vision and the purpose by an unqualified commitment to access as a moral basis for leadership. Frank Newman in his booklet **Higher Education and the American Resurgence** states the case very well.

> *...concern for access must include concern for outcomes as well. Both economic development and civic integration require the full participation of more than just an elite, particularly just a white elite. The enduring and honorable American tradition of opportunity through education must function for the whole of the population.*

9. Finally, the president must have a love for action and combat. The last paragraph of Albert Camus's last published lecture, **Create Dangerously**, summed up the critical importance of action and combat on behalf of one's vision:

> *One may long, as I do, for a gentler flame, a respite, a pause for musing. But perhaps there is no other peace for the artist than what he finds in the heat of combat. "Every wall is a door," Emerson correctly said. Let us not look for the door, and the way out, anywhere but in the wall against which we are living. Instead, let us seek respite where it is--in the very thick of battle. For in my opinion, and this is where I shall close, it is there. Great ideas, it has been said, come into the world as gently as doves. Perhaps then, if we listen attentively, we shall hear, amid the uproar of empires and nations, a faint flutter of wings, the gentle stirring of life and hope. Some will say that this hope lies in a nation; others, in a man. I believe rather that it is awakened, revived, nourished by millions of solitary individuals whose deeds and works every day negate frontiers and the crudest implications of history. As a result, there shines forth fleetingly the ever-threatened truth that each and every man, on the foundation of his own sufferings and joys, builds for all.*

In summary, community colleges are the creation of the vision of many who have walked before us. We inherited our legacy from them. Community Colleges are worth fighting for. As Andrew Jackson said: "*One person armed with a cause is a majority.*" Don't be afraid of action and combat.

Thank you.

LEADERSHIP CAN CREATE EXCELLENCE

Reading List

John N. Terrey

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